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Committee on Relations with the Host Country

Letter dated 15 May 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

I have the honour to enclose a note verbale dated 15 May 2006 from the United States Mission to the United Nations addressed to the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations as a response to the latter's note verbale dated 10 May 2006 (see annex). I request that you circulate the present letter and its annex as a document of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country.

(*Signed*) John R. **Bolton**

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Annex to the letter dated 15 May 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Committee

The United States Mission to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations and wishes to refer to the latter's note verbale No. 363 of 10 May 2006, regarding the denial of the request of Counsellor Rodolfo Benitez Verson to travel to West Point, New York, in order to participate in a four-day seminar held by the International Peace Academy.

Consistent with its responsibilities as the host country to the United Nations and the Missions accredited to it, the United States does not restrict travel within the United States if that travel is for official United Nations business. After careful consideration, the decision to deny Mr. Benitez's travel in this particular instance was made because the travel was not for official United Nations business. The International Peace Academy is not a part of the United Nations system. The Academy describes itself as "an independent, international institution dedicated to promoting the prevention and settlement of armed conflicts" in a manner "free from official constraints". The United States' decision thus does not violate the provisions of the Headquarters Agreement between the United States and the United Nations, nor does it violate any other relevant obligation of the host country under international law.